

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS WARSAW 000177

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PL](#)

SUBJECT: POLISH GOVERNING PARTY SIGNS COOPERATION ACCORD
WITH PROTEST PARTIES, EARLY ELECTIONS SEEN LESS LIKELY

REF: WARSAW 134 AND PREVIOUS

11. (SBU) Summary: Poland's governing Law and Justice (PiS) party concluded a "stabilization pact" February 2 with opposition protest parties Self-Defense (SO) and the League of Polish Families (LPR), committing the parties to cooperate on a detailed legislative agenda but stopping short of a formal coalition (or, apparently, SO and LPR representation in government). PiS leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski declared the "political crisis over," indicating that the need for early elections had been avoided. Kaczynski's twin brother, President Lech Kaczynski, had yet to state as of early February 3 whether he had made a decision on new elections (he has eleven days remaining to decide), but his staff welcomed news of the political pact and suggested that elections are now less likely. PiS may have concluded, based on recent polls, that re-running elections would not yield it a majority and that an alliance with SO and LPR provides the best chance in the short term for implementing its reform agenda. End summary.

12. (SBU) Playing on LPR's and SO's fears that they would fail to win enough support to meet the parliamentary threshold if new elections were held, Jaroslaw Kaczynski masterminded the "stabilization pact" as a kind of coalition on the cheap. The extreme right-wing LPR and populist SO will not formally join the government, but they have agreed to support 156 separate legislative priorities proposed by PiS, notably items key to their domestic agenda, including creation of an anti-corruption office, creation of a truth and justice commission and wider property lustration (public accounting of assets by a broader group of government officials). They also agreed to not criticize the government, or to support any no-confidence vote against PM Marcinkiewicz or anyone in his cabinet. The pact is supposed to last for twelve months, and, according to PiS leading negotiator Przemyslaw Gosiewski, is open to other parties, particularly the Polish Peasants' Party (PSL), which was involved earlier in negotiating with PiS. PiS also continues efforts to peel away members of the principal opposition party, Civic Platform (PO), but the likelihood of a full-fledged PO-PiS coalition (the preference of many in both parties) is now extremely remote.

13. (SBU) PO's Jan Rokita sharply condemned the PiS-LPR-SO stabilization pact as bad for Poland, and predicted that PiS would have trouble governing with unreliable "schemers" such as LPR's Roman Giertych and SO leader Andrzej Lepper. For their part, Giertych and Lepper were enthusiastic about the accord; Giertych declared that the pact marks the beginning of the "Fourth Republic" in Poland (an appellation signifying for the Polish right a wholesale transformation -- and decommunization -- of the state). PiS and its new partners created a minor stir at the signing itself by granting exclusive coverage of the event to right-wing Catholic new media (previously supporters of LPR, now aggressively courted by PiS). Mainstream media boycotted a news conference afterwards in protest.

14. (SBU) Comment: The threat of new elections has eased, but cannot be dismissed entirely -- not given the volatile political scene of recent weeks. We understand from senior PiS officials that the party leadership was nearly evenly split on whether to back the pact or seek new elections. Recent polls have shown PO maintaining a close second place to PiS, which -- together with smaller parties just surpassing the five-percent threshold -- would deny PiS the absolute majority it craves. Under those circumstances, Jaroslaw Kaczynski has admitted, it would make no sense to hold new elections only to return to the same relative position. However, LPR's and SO's reliability as partners (especially once the president's window of opportunity to call elections passes) has to be a concern for PiS, even as Kaczynski may be looking at this arrangement as an opportunity to hold these parties close and displace them completely with their electorates.

ASHE